**Become a Partner:**
**Guide to Research Partnerships and Consortiums**

If you would like to partner with the Michigan Department of Education (MDE) and Michigan's Center for Educational Performance and Information (CEPI), the Research Collaborative can help to ensure that partnership principals are followed, the quality of research is assured and the interest of all partners are respected.

1. Please view the current Research Agenda on the Evaluation and Strategic Research webpage at: www.mi.gov/mde-research. Partnerships are contingent upon alignment with at least one of the priority policy areas.

2. Additionally, the Research Collaborative requires, depending on the partnership:
    a. Policy reports geared toward policymakers, parents and media
    b. Executive summaries geared toward MDE and CEPI
    c. Policy briefings to present major findings and answer questions
    d. Technical briefings
    e. Technical reports
    f. Technical products including code and instruments for replication
    g. External presentations at both state-based and nationally

To propose a research partnership or consortium, please send an email message to MDE-Research@michigan.gov and indicate:
- Your name
- Contact information and organization
- Research agenda item(s)
- Type of collaboration desired

**Forming partnerships/consortiums has several benefits, including:**
- The volume of information within a field is vast and a division of labor is efficient
- A consortium can be an "incubator" for new ideas and new thinking
- The whole created by collaboration is greater than the sum of the individual contributors
- A system of checks and balances can be better implemented
- Funding sources are under stress and a consortium may increase likelihood of funding
- Investigators continually need complementary skills, since research is increasingly complex and inter-related
- New skills are brought to a project not typically found in individual researchers
- Interdisciplinary issues can be better studied
- Synergies
- Mentor/mentee relationships
- Opportunity to engage in collegiality
- May allow for testing of similar hypotheses simultaneously by different individuals

**There are various types of research partnerships/collaboration:**
- One researcher using another researcher's equipment
- Partnerships between two or more researchers sharing ideas
- Multi-researcher interface and sharing in a central location
- Partnerships between institutional researchers and those outside of the institution

**Potential Partnership/Collaboration Issues:**
- Communication; the parties failed to explicitly define their expectations of one another
- Authorship disputes
- Lack of compliance
- Improper attribution or credit
- Disagreement about sharing time, work, data and resources
- Disputes over disseminating findings
- Who gets credit for promotion, tenure and curriculum vitae
- Researchers at different career levels may experience an imbalance of power
- Liability
- Which entity owns the intellectual property or what fraction of it
- Ability to disseminate information (proprietary information, trade secrets)
- Different operating parameters may lead to more compliance/legal requirements – material transfer agreements, review by multiple IRBs
- Differing ethical and cultural standards and customs
- Oversight of students and postdocs on collaborative projects
    a. Who is responsible?
    b. Who do they take direction from?
    c. What level of credit will they receive?

**Possible Remedies for Partnership/Collaboration Issues:**
- Communicate, communicate and communicate
- Play nice!
- Don't make assumptions
- Define expectations and assignments of who will do what
- Agree on authorship in advance
- Determine data and material management practices
- Make sure everyone understands who will have primary responsibility for data and materials and what everyone's role is
- Agree on intellectual property (IP) ahead of time and determine if any collaborators are bringing IP into the project and the IP outcomes of the project
- Discuss accountability to the project
- Be proactive rather than reactive
- Disclose conflicts of interest ahead of time
- Determine if you need teaming agreements such as:
    a. Collaboration Agreements

b. Intellectual Property Agreements
c. Material Transfer Agreements
d. Memorandums of Understanding
e. Data Sharing Plans
f. Facility Use Agreements